

## Letter from Alexander Graham Bell to Alexander Melville Bell, April 9, 1871, with transcript

Copy of a letter written by Alexander Graham Bell to his parents and Carrie. 2 Bulfinch Place, Boston, April 9th, 1871. Dear Pamaca (1)

You are of course anxious to hear how I have been getting on since you heard last — so here goes. Thursday Mr. King called for me in the morning and we went out for a walk. Saw the outsides of the Public Library, Institute of Technology, etc., etc., etc. Showed me where I should find Fields — Publisher, Lee and Shepard, etc. I could not do anything with letters of introduction. Thursday being a holiday and at the same time a fine day — every person was either at church or out of doors. Mr. Alger I found had gone on a visit to Europe. Prof. Monroe was fortunately in and I saw him and his wife. He informed me of Mr. Mackay's lecture on Delsarte (a notice of which I sent you) and illustrated one or two points. The conversation turned to Overtones and Helmholtz. He gave me some new light on the experiment of Helmholtz and Tyndall. And has lent me Tyndall's new work on "Sound" to read at my leisure. He and Mrs. Monroe were much interested in the pitch of the whispered vowels and were struck by the effect of tapping the Larynx. Mrs. Monroe's ear detected the double scale of pitches in the whispered vowels.

At supper 11 p. m. Vandenhoff, Wallack and I had a discussion on Mr. Mackay's lecture. Wallack had been present and though much astonished and delighted at Mr. Mackay's graceful and expressive movements, did not see the use of studying either gesture 2 or Delsarte's "grades of facial expression ." He maintained that a man's own feelings would prompt him to use expressive gestures and looks without any instruction from Delsarte or any one else. He admitted that training might make gesture (by which he means the movements of the arms and body) more "graceful " but denied that it could have any effect whatever on the movements of the face.

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Friday — Mr. King was very attentive. Called for me again and took me to the State House. Introduced me to Mr. Washburne — a member of the government and another gentleman and his daughter. We were in hopes that we should find Dr. Hill at the State House — but he did not make his appearance. Mr. Washburne took me in to the Assembly which was sitting at the time. I heard a coloured member address the House on the Ku Klux Conspiracy in North Carolina. He urged the State of Massachusetts, after the invitation of President Grant, to show its determination that the lives and properties of the negroes in the Southern States should be respected, and that the laws should be strictly enforced. Though a Mulatto he was evidently an educated gentleman. He read his speech well but timidly — the members gabbling away to each other all the time!! After dinner I posted your letter to Dr. Hill and called on Fields the Publisher. He was not in, but soon left his card at Miss Fisher's for me with his private address on it. I have not seen his yet. At Lee and Sheppard's I saw Mr. Lee. He requested me to make myself at home with them and referred to the books. Asked me to let them know a short time before I left Boston and they would account to me for them. Not being in his department he did not know whether any had 3 been sold or not.

Left Dr. Howe's letter and my card at the shop for the Blind. Called on Miss Drew but the house was all looked up, and no attention was paid to my raps. Not seeing any letter-box I posted your introd. I was not able to see Dr. Cotting but I did not leave the letter as I should like to deliver it in person. Mr. Winsor was exceedingly kind and attentive. I saw Prof. Watson only for a few moments.

A complete set of Helmholtz' apparatus is in the Institute. Prof. Monroe is going to repeat Helmholtz' experiments with me shortly. Saw Mr. Wannemacher for a few minutes and he invited me to dine with him to-day (Sunday).

In the evening Wallack and I went to see Warren in the Octoroon. Very much pleased indeed but don't like the American termination of the Play at all. The poor Octoroon, to escape her impending fate, takes poison which she prevails upon her unfortunate lover

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to administer — he, poor fellow, thinking he is only pouring out medicine. She is informed of the happy end of her troubles just too late and dies in the arms of her lover. American Prejudice is too strong to permit of the young man marrying the Octoroon and so she dies.

Saturday. I spent the forenoon in mounting the smaller of my two diagrams or rather in seeing it done at a "Paper-Box Factory," in getting some boxes for the cards and in viewing the Factory. I then went out with the intention of calling upon Dr. 4 Cotting but the day was so intolerably hot — that I could not stand it — so I bought some oranges — retired to my room — flung aside coat and vest and commenced to devour Tyndall's book a nd the oranges . Then I wrote to Prof. Monroe inviting him to be present at an "Exhibition" of the Deaf and Dumb children to be held on Wednesday morning. After dinner Mr. Warren asked me to come into his room and have a chat. We talked till dusk when I went downstairs and sound up the evening with cribbage and music. At supper the Discussion on Mr. Mackay's lecture was renewed with vehemence between Vandenhoff and Wallack. Mrs. Wallack made her first appearance at the supper table. She looks v ery ill and seems scarcely able to walk. Wallack is not acting just now. He has a rest during the run of Arrah no Pogue. He has a box at the Globe for Monday evening and has asked me to accompany himself and two ladies on the occasion.

Sunday. To-day Mr. Wannemacher called for me. The day was rather threatening so he did not make his appearance till nearly noon. After a short walk we took lunch at Parker's Hotel — found our way to the horse-care and departed for his home. I have spent a very pleasant day with the Wannemachers. For once Papa's idea of beauty coincides with my own — Mrs. Wannemacher is certainly very pretty. We had quite a musical afternoon. Mrs. W. plays with not much execution but with i ntense feeling — and also sings well. Mr. W. has a fine and expressive voice and uses it well. Mrs. — I forget her name — (Mrs. W.'s mother) looks young enough 5 to be the sister of her daughter.

Mrs. W. — Miss Fisher and Mrs. Wallack all wish to thank Mama for the Sketches. They are very much admired. The heaps of kind regards from every body to Papa I will not

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attempt to transcribe further than saying, like old Mr. Mitchell "There's quite a pile on 'em."  
"That is so" "Yes Sir."

Love to Davie and everybody.

I commence my work tomorrow morning at 9 a. m.

I have not yet seen the teachers. Mr. King will call for me, and will introduce me.

I find that my second best pair of black trousers are unwearable. So tight that they won't button by a couple of inches . I also find that I have no dress coat with me.

I enclose a receipt for making "Chow Chow" — a delicious pickle I tasted at Mrs. Wannemacher's to-day. It should not be made till the autumn, but, as Mrs. W. suggests "in the meantime you can be growing the ingredients ." Love

LOVE —

Write soon.

I am dear Pamaca

Yours affectionately, Aleck. Prof. A. M. Bell.